



Kalamazoo
Public Library

KPL Creates Community

2019–20 Annual Report

A Different Type of Year, in Review



Ryan Wieber, Director

KPL's new strategic plan put into place actions to engage the community, advance equity and inclusion, and inspire literacy, learning, and experiences. One of those actions—the monumental New Year, No Fines signaled the end of fines for overdue materials for all patrons. KPL first implemented no fines for children's materials decades earlier, however, January 1, 2020 ushered into place the new policy eliminating them for all other items. Intended to remove barriers and serve as an invitation to welcome back patrons who were blocked from access to books because of longstanding or burdensome fine balances, the action was well received by the community and prompted other libraries to consider fine free, too. The pandemic disruption certainly clouded the story of fine free at KPL though, as only a few months of statistics provided a good picture of its immediate effect.

The library also embarked on reaching more patrons by planning for an upcoming new mobile library, to be readied and put on the road in 2020-2021, post-pandemic. Its charge will be to reach underserved areas, promote reading, and introduce the library to those who are not familiar with it.

Many events related to the library's annual community-wide signature event, Reading Together, were canceled as a result

of the COVID shutdown, however, we were grateful for author Jonathan Safran Foer's visit on March 10 to speak on *We are the Weather*. The world quickly began to shelter in place later that week.

The pandemic forced KPL to quickly react and readjust its services to a virtual world for the last three months of the fiscal year by creating online programming versions of standbys such as story times, book discussion groups, and author visits. The longstanding Global Reading Challenge book-battle events with local schools was put on the shelf, and the annual Party in Park at Bronson Park had to occur in a much reduced and virtual-only version. Library patrons had the most basic of services available, with even access to print books and DVDs off limits due to the Stay at Home order, and only essential staff working in buildings. Staff, however, found ways to enhance digital collections by giving new patrons the ability to register for instant-access library cards online, and supplementing the library's collection with increased purchases and availability of econtent.

While in closed-down mode, the world experienced the tragedy of the George Floyd murder, and the resulting turmoil. As the world and Kalamazoo community voiced their frustration, KPL staff contributed to an inspiring day of togetherness on June 19 –known as Juneteenth—right outside our Central location's doors, by helping create a street mural recognizing Black Lives Matter. 📸



The KPL Plan

Vision

Leading a stronger community through literacy, learning, and innovation

Community Aspirations

Equitable and Inclusive,
Literate and Educated,
Informed, Creative

Core Values

At the Kalamazoo Public Library:

- We are committed to excellence in programs, services and collections.
- We are community-focused.
- We are committed to and intentional about equity and anti-racism.
- We have safe, beautiful, and comfortable spaces.
- We are committed to continuous improvement and innovation.
- We have a passionate, engaged, knowledgeable, and creative staff.

Board of Trustees

Officers

Lisa A. Godfrey, President
Jannie Williams, Vice President
Robert Paul Brown, Treasurer
Cheryl Tenbrink, Secretary

Trustees

Christine Kindy, Trustee
Jennifer Moore, Trustee
Anna M. Moss, Trustee

Administration

Ryan Wieber, Library Director
Janice Carter, Executive Assistant

Phone: (269) 553-7800

Branch Managers

Kala Luzia, Alma Powell
Judi Rambow, Eastwood
Steve Siebers, Washington Square
Andrea Vernola, Oshtemo

Leadership Team

Michael Cockrell, Patron Services
Nnamdi Dike, Finance & Budget
Farrell Howe, Marketing & Communications
Kevin King, Community Engagement

Terry New, Human Resources
Tom Sowell, Facilities Management
Sandra Farag, Youth Services
Jarrod Wilson, Technology Services



Central

315 S. Rose St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Eastwood

1112 Gayle Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49048

Oshtemo

7265 W Main St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Alma Powell

1000 W. Paterson St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Washington Square

1244 Portage St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Who We Are: Staff 2019–20

Alcenijs-Hoisington, Amy L.
Almy, Kathryn F.
Anderson-Hampton, Janelle M.
Arnsman, Lauren R.
Baldino, Greg A.
Barnes, Paul J.
Bartos, Corey J.
Bostwick, Takoda J.
Bouma, Lauri K.
Braat, Steven A.
Breeding, Jeremy D.
Brown, Ben F.
Brown, Joseph C.
Bruex, Benjamin L.
Bryant, Lucy
Buchanan, Duane K.
Buchanan, Duane D.
Bunting, Miles D.
Cardenas Gallegos, Edgar E.
Carter, Janice R.
Caskey, William R.
Chase, Amy M.
Clardy, Christine L.
Clarey, James T.
Clark, Amy M.
Cline-Cole, Essence C.
Coates, Brent L.
Coates, Scott R.
Cockrell, Michael R.
Cortes, Humberto E.
Covert, Elyse N.
Curtis, Kimion C.
Dawson, Tanai R.
Deater, Thomas J.
DeJonghe, Mitchell
Devries, David J.
Dibella, Ann R.
Dike, Nnamdi E.

Dooley, Petra B.
Dowdell, Erika L.
Edds, Ben M.
Esparza II, Edward G.
Essix, Dominique L.
Evans, Katherine B.
Figgins, Ruth A.
Flentje, Abigail G.
Fortin, Angela L.
Fox, Maria C.
Fritz, Stewart L.
Gage, Ryan A.
Gildea, Robert J.
Gill, Theodore M.
Gilman, Matthew P.
Grady, Tajah J.
Griswold, Mary I.
Hall, Linda C.
Hall, Tod L.
Hand, Wendy L.
Haney, Rory
Hann, Christine L.
Hartman, Rose M.
Haywood, Asia M.
Hensley, Kristoffer C.
Hernandez, Miriam
Hernandez-Torres, Ruby
Hoag, Caitlin E.
Hoag, Daniel J.
Hodges, Waneta G.
Horn, Tootie
Howard, Keith F.
Howe, Farrell L.
Huber, Anastasia
Hubert, Liana A.
Hudson, Alexander P.
Hudson, Rachel M.
Hughes, Samuel M.

Hybels, Megan
Isham, Natalie J.
Jackson, Brianna
Jackson, Jermaine
Jaglan, Vikender S.
Jastrzembki, Amy J.
Jerow, JoJo
Johnson, Derek M.
Johnson, Rachel M.
Jouppi, John P.
Jouppi, Kirsten R.
Kabell, Christine H.
Kell, Elizabeth
Kelly, Destany T.
King, Kevin A.
Knack, Karl J.
Kowalysyn, Sally J.
Kreps, Dennis A.
Kubash, Emily A.
Lagrone, Charlene A.
Landreville, Brigitte
Lannon, Maureen R.
Lansky, Jill A.
Larson, Catherine A.
Larson, Kristen M.
Lbert, Donaver B.
Leach, Jesselyn
Lechel, Matthew H.
Lentz, Shelby
Lewis, Tady E.
Lilek, Robyn L.
Lundberg, Joanna C.
Luzia, Kala A.
Maas, Susan K.
Maesen, Steven P.
Maiytt, Christopher E.
Maley, Bethany N.
Malice, Asa D.

Manley, Amy Sue
Marts, Makenzie
McCormick, Eleanor M.
Meinema, Julie R.
Merrill, Alexander P.
Meyers, John J.
Morgan, Emma K.
Munoz, Daniel
New, Terry M.
Nyenhuis, Sarah V.
Nykamp, Cassidy R.
O'Connor, Susan
Omili, Max
Ongley, Jill R.
Ormaza, Francisco
Orozco, Milan J.
Overhiser, Elizabeth H.
Parker, Chantel
Parish, Joshua W.
Patterson, Diana
Petrelli Cicerone, Vinicius
Pikaart, Benjamin A.
Platte, Mary J.
Potts, Brittany L.
Powe, Tyesha I.
Quakenbush, Kate
Raaymakers, Mazalyn
Rambow, Judith D.
Rodriguez, Angelina M.
Ryan, Elysha
Ross, Kim E.
Sablatzky, Tenley
Santiago-Lugo, Carlos R.
Savara, Ragan N.
Schaus, Joshua R.
Sellin, Philip W.
Shavers, Lasheka
Shawaryn, Janet K.

Sheaks, Riley W.
Siebers, Steven C.
Slotwinski, Hanna M.
Smith, Jerry M.
Smith, Linda M.
Smith, Marybeth J.
Smith, Matthew A.
Smith, Nancy M.
Snow, Cylise F.
Sowell, Thomas E.
Steadman, Kathryn A.
Steel, Rebecca D.
Stern, Nancy A.
Stevenson III, Chester O.
Stover, Amanda S.
Street, Briani
Timmerman, Elizabeth A.
Trout, Karen
VandeWouwer, Kathleen M.
VanKrimpen, Kyle
Vanlear, Jun A.
Vater, Karen
Veld, Barbara A.
Veld, Joseph D.
Vernola, Andrea L.
Walker, Ann E.
Ward, Grace S.
Warner, Susan K.
Weirick, Andrew G.
West, Jamel T.
White, Jameel
Wieber, Ryan S.
Williams, Sarah
Wilson, Jarrod P.
Wilson, Ruth C.
Wydick, Imane
Yousif, Mustafa O.
Yowell, Lauren R.

Staff Retirements



Sue Warner began her career at KPL as a student assistant from 1967–77, and then returned in 1988 to serve as a children's librarian. In 1992, Sue became the Head of Youth Services and led countless programs, formed numerous, impactful community partnerships and mentored many library staff in their careers. Some of KPL's most recognizable programs were made successful under Sue's leadership including the annual *Global Reading Challenge*, *Summer Reading Challenge* and so much more. Her work greatly impacted early childhood literacy initiatives in Kalamazoo and KPL staff and the community recognize her impact on improving the lives of children and their families. 📧



Beth Timmerman began her time at Kalamazoo Public Library as an intern, while pursuing an MLIS degree. She was then hired on as a librarian, working in adult services before finding her niche as the lead in Local History. Beth's personal interest in documenting and photographing cemeteries led to a deep interest in Michigan History that made her a perfect fit to lead Local History. The impact that Beth had on KPL's Local History department is significant. She saw an opportunity to draw people into the rich history of Kalamazoo through programming and went looking for unique stories and presenters that would do just that. Thanks to Beth's vision and hard work, many of those presenters continue to partner with KPL to provide programming that connects our community to the unique history of Kalamazoo. 📧

KPL's Response to COVID-19

On March 14, 2020, all Kalamazoo Public Library locations were forced to close to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Our staff took immediate action to ensure that we could continue to provide as many library services to our community as possible, especially during a time rife with crisis and need.

One of the first things we did was respond to the call for PPE and disinfecting supplies for our local hospitals. At the beginning of the pandemic, hospitals across the country found themselves struggling to find enough PPE for their staff to safely treat the surge of COVID-19 patients. KPL immediately donated our available PPE to Bronson Methodist Hospital and this donation included:

- **3,400 gloves**
- **100 hairnets**
- **37 plastic coveralls**
- **86 containers of disinfectant/sanitizer**
- **100 disposable shoe covers**
- **23 disposable rubber overshoes**
- **50 disposable masks**
- **7 N-95 respirator masks**



To help keep our community informed, we created a COVID-19 resource page on our website to provide as much information about essential services and COVID-19 recommendations as we could find. This page was visited **249** times and was recommended as a public resource by many other local organizations. We also launched our online chat feature **Ask a Librarian** and responded to **an average of 100 chats per month**.



KPL also featured online tutorials on our website for the public to create homemade masks and aprons to donate to the cause. Ruth Wilson, a Local History Assistant at KPL hosted an online program providing step-by-step instructions for how to sew homemade masks. She personally created and donated more than **80** masks to friends, coworkers, and to the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission.

With our buildings closed, our number one concern became ensuring our community had access to our digital collection. We knew that without a library card that wouldn't be possible. So, we enabled our patrons to sign up online which resulted in **645** KPL library card sign-ups by June 30, 2021.

The pandemic created an increased demand in educational resources and online entertainment. KPL's efforts focused solely on promoting our digital collection, online resources and creating fun and educational online programming for all ages to enjoy. 📺

March 14, 2020–June 30, 2021 COVID-19 Catalog & Programming Statistics

Digital Collection (eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMusic)



Programs to Feature



To address Wi-Fi inequities in Kalamazoo, KPL partnered with Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS), The Kalamazoo Promise, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, and the City of Kalamazoo with funding provided by The Foundation for Excellence to provide Wi-Fi routers with unlimited Internet service to **1,000** households in Kalamazoo. The partnership, known as Digital Access for All (DAFA) was formed on April 2, 2020.

To assist patrons who were unable to utilize digital resources and could not leave their homes, the library utilized ViaMail service to deliver **261 materials**.

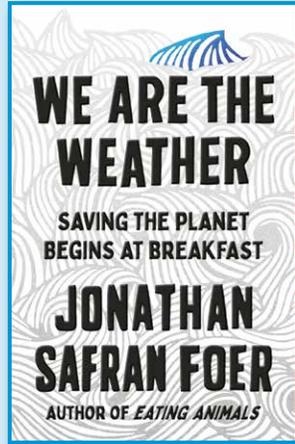
2020 Reading Together

For 2020, KPL selected—
We are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast
 by Jonathan Safran Foer

The *Meet the Author* event was scheduled for **March 10**, right when the pandemic was really picking up and businesses were beginning to shut down.



Fortunately, Foer still decided to come to Kalamazoo to speak and more than **600 attended**. Unfortunately, the library shut down on March 14 so all subsequent *Reading Together* programs for 2020 were canceled. 📧



KPL Becomes Fine-Free on January 1, 2020



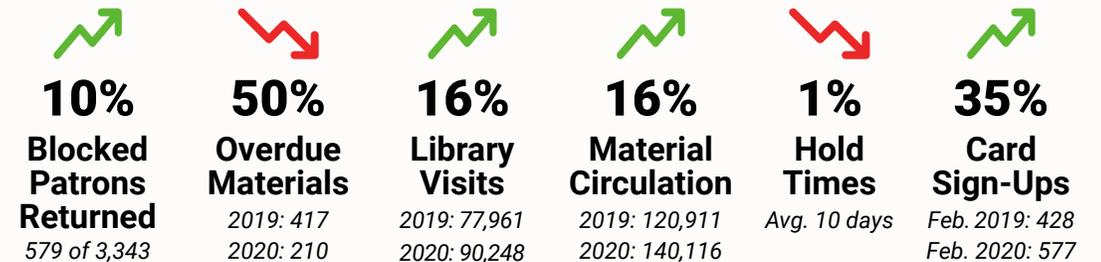
Kalamazoo Public Library became a fine-free library on January 1, 2020. The goal of eliminating fines was to remove the financial barrier to library access. Patron usage reports indicated that at any given time, up to 15% of our card holders were blocked due to overdue fines. Additional investigation revealed those blocked patrons mostly reside in lower income neighborhoods. By eliminating fines, KPL wanted to welcome back blocked patrons and eliminate any financial barrier to library access. 📧

The MAIN GOALS of going fine-free:

1. Welcome back blocked patrons and have them utilize the library again!
2. Increase return of lost materials.
3. Increase new card sign-ups.
4. Increase library visits.
5. Increase circulation.

“It’s an excellent opportunity for a clean slate for many people in our community. As a social worker, I have had numerous clients unable or unlikely to use the resources the public library has to offer because they saw fines as a barrier.” — KPL patron

Fine-Free Stats | January 1–February 29, 2020

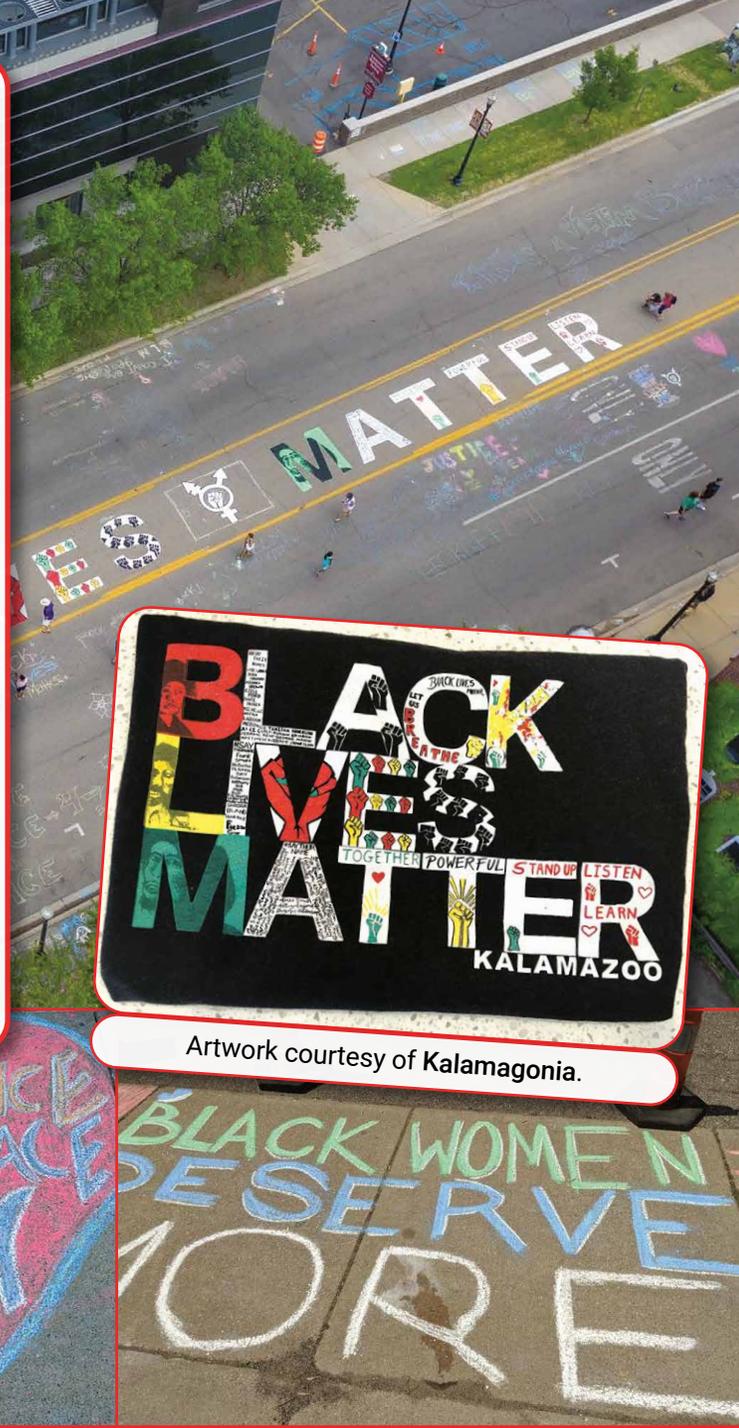


Black Lives Matter Mural & Juneteenth

When KPL Library Assistant Jermaine Jackson saw the coverage of the massive Black Lives Matter street mural in Washington, D.C. he wondered, "Can we do something like this in Kalamazoo?" It was June 12th, and he knew the best, most impactful day to unite the Kalamazoo community through a project like this would be June 19th, also known as Juneteenth, the nationally-celebrated commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States.

On June 19th hundreds of volunteers from all demographics came from Kalamazoo, Portage, Battle Creek and beyond to paint the Black Lives Matter street mural on Rose Street between Lovell and South Street. Hundreds more came to watch the process as the mural blossomed from stenciled words to a brightly colored, highly impactful artistic expression.

The Kalamazoo Black Lives Matter street mural is not just a beautiful work of art. It is a statement, a testament, a commitment from the Kalamazoo community and beyond that we will stand with our black brothers and sister in unity and tell the world in one voice that Black Lives Matter. Jackson summed up the efforts of that historical day perfectly. "The power of love is greater than the power of hate any day. That is what this day was about. Love." 📷

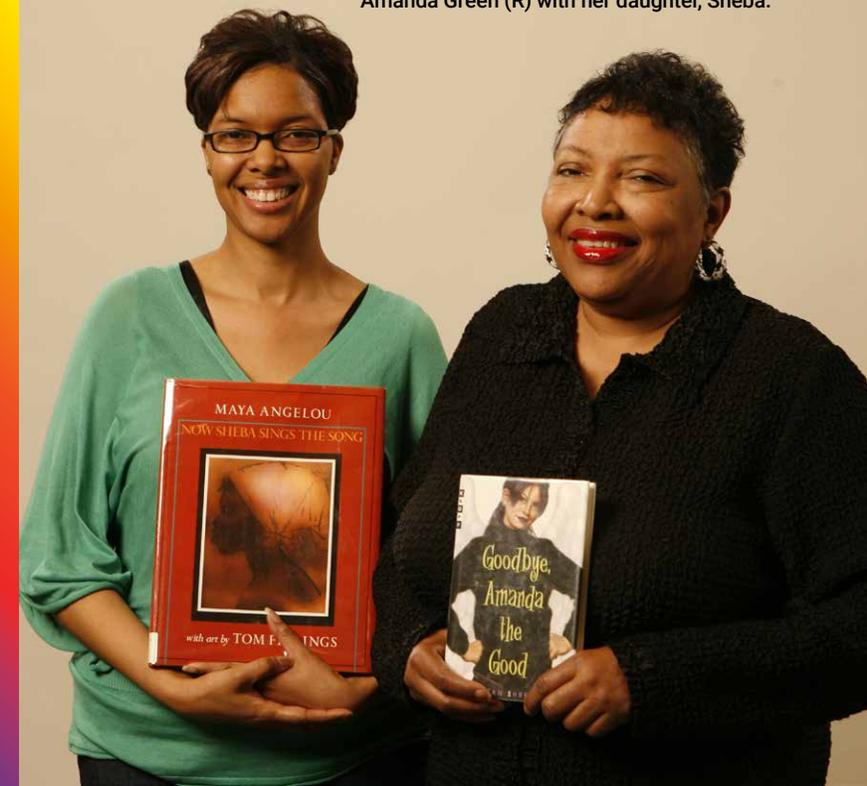


Artwork courtesy of Kalamagonia.

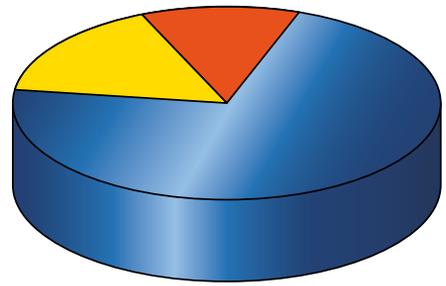
Amanda Green Scholarship Fund

In the fall of 2019, The KPL Board signed a resolution to create a scholarship opportunity for persons of color interested in librarianship. Named after a former KPL librarian, Amanda Green who was an activist for social justice and equality and worked hard to eliminate barriers to service at KPL. KPL's Amanda Green Scholarship has been endowed at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and will begin awarding recipients in the fall of 2021. 📷

Amanda Green (R) with her daughter, Sheba.

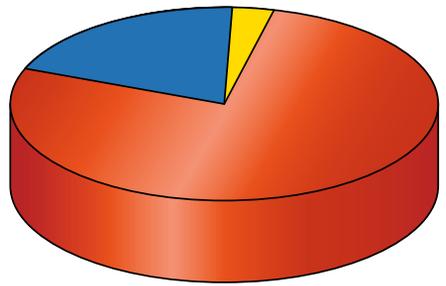


Statistics 7.1.2019–6.30.2020



Circulation

Children's	286,547
Adult	858,322
Digital	247,165
Total	1,392,034



Collection Size

Print	365,797
Audio-visual	60,646
Digital	951,512
Total	1,377,955



Computer Use

Public computer internet sessions	77,762
Website visits	671,196



Programming

Children's programs	1,134
Children's program attendance	41,368
Teen programs	287
Teen program attendance	12,238
Adult programs	421
Adult program attendance	10,887



Location	Total
CEN	236,566
EAS	17,266
OSH	87,900
POW	31,024
WSQ	25,283

Patron Visits
398,039



Reference & Interlibrary Loan

Reference transactions	153,242
MeL interlibrary items loaned	12,699
MeL interlibrary items borrowed	12,966

Statistics

(continued)



OneCard: Overall Stats

- **13,831** student OneCards were issued
- **6,062** student OneCards were active during the school year
- **134,817** items circulated by students using a OneCard during the school year
- First grade was once again the most active (largely due to the traditional first-grade visits program)

OneCard: Top Circulating Schools

- **10,043** items checked out by Kalamazoo Central High School students
- **6,298** checked out by Maple Street Middle School students
- **6,437** checked out by King-Westwood Elementary students



Geek Fest

Including all participants and swag bags given out, was **102.43** adults. Attendance: **1,500**

Global Reading Challenge

In 2020, **16** schools participated, for a total of **121** teams. Unfortunately, we were only able to hold two school challenges (Arcadia and Winchell) prior to shutting down on March 13. The important part is sharing these books with kids and classrooms, and that work was able to happen! Each team received a set of the 10 books selected for the year to keep. This program was partially funded by a grant from the Gary Sisters Foundation.



Great Grown-up Spelling Bee

- The 2019 Spelling Bee raised **\$12,000** for Ready to Read.
- Fiscal year of **July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020**
- **16,450** gift books distributed via Ready to Read
- **25** Partner organizations



Party in the Park/Ready to Read

KPL hosted the 2nd Annual Vicksburg Party in the Park in September 2019 with **177** in attendance.

The library also hosted the 1st Annual Galesburg-Augusta *Party in the Park* in October 2019 with **117** in attendance.

The Kalamazoo Public Library *Party in the Park* was canceled in May of 2020. Instead of an in-person event, we offered a one day takeover on **kpl.gov** filled with online storytimes from KPL Staff – some dressed as our favorite Party in the Park characters.

Representing Kalamazoo Public Library, **Ready to Read** became a foundational partner with KRESA on the *Talking is Teaching* campaign. Partners include Kalamazoo Literacy Council, KC Ready 4's, Kalamazoo County Early Childhood and KRESA Literacy Specialists.



Summer Reading Challenge

1,494 registered participants

- **143** babies and toddlers
- **200** preschoolers
- **887** elementary readers
- **267** Teens

Branch Totals

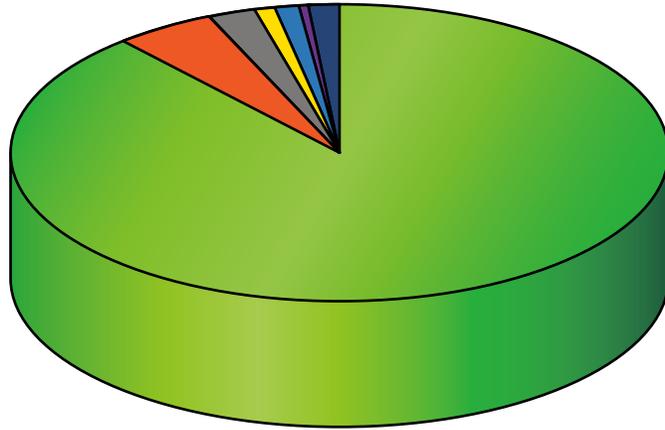
- Central: **570**
- Eastwood: **46**
- Oshtemo: **667**
- Powell: **73**
- Washington Square: **103**

Miscellaneous

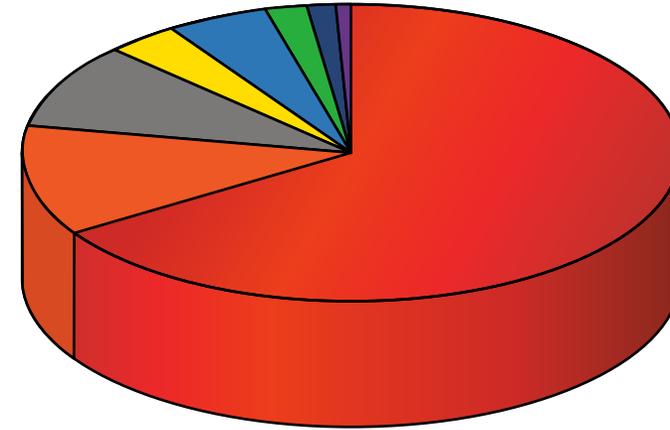
- **764** Completed entire game
- **2,677** Completed Activities
- *Where the Wild Things Are* was read **232** times
- **3,065** Rewards collected

Financials

Audited Financials—Tax Payer Funds



Revenue*	Taxpayer Funds
Property Taxes	11,658,211
State Aid	622,145
Grants and Memorials	319,184
Investment Income	132,639
District Court Penal Fines	170,320
Library Fines and Fees	53,154
Other	232,745
Total Revenue	13,188,398



Expenditures*	Taxpayer Funds
Salaries & Benefits	8,239,924
Library Books and Materials	1,147,866
Technical & Purchased Services	1,276,328
Facilities Maintenance & Repair	546,211
Capital Expenditures	1,154,041
Operating	304,453
Programming	185,180
Other	78,428
Total Expenditures	12,932,431

* General Operating Fund and Capital Improvement Fund only.



Kalamazoo
Public Library

Organized in 1860 and opened to the general public in 1872, Kalamazoo Public Library now serves a district population of 116,000 through five locations plus multiple outreach ventures. Many Southwest Michigan residents use Kalamazoo Public Library through reciprocal agreements with neighboring libraries.

kpl.gov